and a little farther on,—

Facite vostro animo volupe,—*

and again,

Hac dabo protinam, et fugiam,—

* 'Casina,' IV, 2, 5. The following line is from the same play, V, 3, 13.

men did not yet write either according to rule or grammatically; whereas afterward the said Latin tongue was so well polished that it would to-day be shameful & foolish to say *homonem, sanguen, empsitem, volupe,* and *protinam*. There are a thousand other forms of speech of like sort, which Hieronymus Avantius, a native of Verona, sets down at the beginning of the annotations which he has made with such careful diligence on the works of the ancient poet Lucretius, which I leave for the curious and lovers of antiquity, and which you can see and read your fill of, in a dialogue entitled *Osci et Volsci Dialogus ludis Romanis actus.*[13]

WHen Donatus, Servius, Priscianus, Diomedes, Phocas, Agrestius, Caper, Probus, & other good authors of like sort had appeared, they polished it and put it † in such order, that it progressed from good to better in its perfectness, so that the Romans, who held sway over the greater part of the world, prospered more & won more victories by their language than by arms. Would God that we could do likewise, not that we might be tyrants and rulers over all men, but that, having our language well ordered, we might commit to memory and to writing the goodly arts and sciences. I see now that, if we wish to acquire some certain kind of knowledge, we must beg and take it, as if by stealth, from the Greeks and Latins; and they have naught to get from us, or from what we are able to learn. Our language is as easy to regulate & put in order as the Greek tongue was of old, in which there are five varieties of dialect—the Attic, the Doric, the Æolian, the Ionic, and the Common, which differ from one another in the declination of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, orthography, accents, and pronunciation, which a Greek author, Johannes the grammarian, & many others, discourse of & show very fully. In the same way, we might well do with the language of the Court and of Paris, with the Picard, the Lyonnais, the Limousin, & the Provençal. I would set down here some of the differences and similarities, were it not that I do not wish to take too much time hereon, and I leave it for those better informed than I to attend to it.

† *That is, the Latin language. As the 'good authors' he mentions are mainly post-classical, Tory's comments carry a severe stricture on the language of the classical authors.*[14]

I Make no doubt that sometimes new words appear in our language, and, as Horace says in his *Ars Poetica,*—

Multa renascentur, quæ iam cecidere, cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet vsus.*

* *Line 70. Translated by Tory after quoting.*

Many words are reborn which were long since abandoned, and those which are current to-day will be abolished again, if usage wills. Usage and time bring and take away many words, old and new; and to this effect Pontanus says in his first book, *De Aspiratione:* 'Lapse of time made *Messalam* from *Messana; valerium* from *valesio; furium* from *fusio; lites* from *sclitibus; locum* from *scloco; lemures* from *remulibus; ordeum* from *fordeo; Cassandram* from *Cassantra;* from what was *Odysseus, Vlysem; liberum* from *lebero; heri* from *here; sibi* from *sibe; curauit* from *coerauit; velocem* from *voloce; me* from the accusative *mee; bellum* from *duello;* from *aijo,* in which the I is doubled, *aio; compesce* from *comperce; credas* from *creduis; des* from *duis; hespruginem* from *hesprug;* and a thousand others.'

I Pass all these things by, and return to our subject of letters; but it seems to me that it will not be without profit if, first of all, I write here of their origin and invention, as I have been able to read in divers authors, both ancient and modern.

AS to the invention of letters, there are different opinions. Priscian says that the Chaldeans were the original inventors.[15] Lactantius says, in his *Institutiones Diuinæ,* that the Egyptians first devised and designed them, like all other useful things, both of the hand and of the mind, which they invented, & this by favour of the temperate climate of the country where they live. And they themselves say that they were the first men. It is Plato's opinion that letters have existed of all time, just as he believed that the world had always existed. Pliny, also, in chapter LVI of the seventh book of his Natural History, is of opinion that letters were always Assyrian; nevertheless he quotes diverse opinions. Josephus, Pomponius Mela, & the poet-historian Lucan are of opinion that the Phœnicians, who are in Syria, invented the letters. Lucan says,—

Phœnices primi, famæ si creditur, ausi
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.†

† '*Pharsalia,*' III, 220.

That is to say, the Phœnicians, if report is to be believed, were the first who tried to represent the voice of man in written forms and in letters. The said Josephus has left it in writing that the children of Adam invented the forms and characters of letters, and that they wrote in two

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